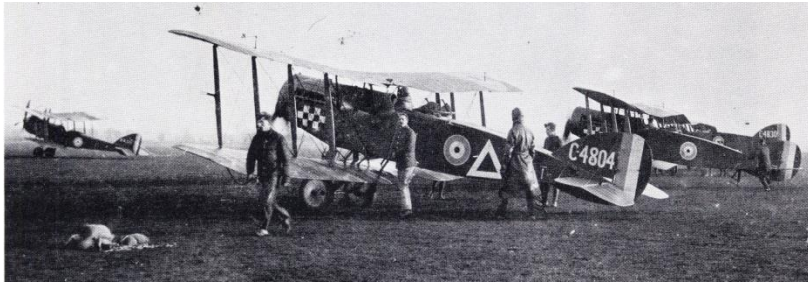


2nd Lt John Reginald Nickson



DoB: 26th March 1891

Died: 2nd January 1918

Age: 26

Buried: Wolvercote Cemetery. (grave has his age as 25)

Family:

Born in Vancouver BC to John Joseph (died 1912) and Jane Nickson and known as “Rex”. Father was born in Cheshire and emigrated in 1885. His father was Superintendent of Vancouver Water Works. 7 siblings – 5 older, 2 younger. 3 of the eldest born in England. John was a contractor prior to enlisting and had been in the High School Cadets. He built his own home on 140 acres he pre-empted in 1912 in Sechelt.

Military Career:

Enlisted 4th December 1914 as a private, and served for two years in France with the 2nd Bttn Canadian Mounted Rifles, and then the 1st Bttn Central Ontario Regt. John was in the trenches in France in October 1915 after training as a bomb thrower. July 1916 saw him in a field hospital three times for “infected legs”. Soon afterwards he was transferred to be groom/batman for Capt. William Wasborough Foster, DSO. In Feb 1917 he was discharged for medical reasons and was to be sent home, but instead chose to transfer to the Royal Flying Corps to train as a pilot.

John was granted his commission in the R.F.C becoming 2nd Lt on 6th July 1917, and a qualified Flying Officer on 29th August 1917. Served with 2 other squadrons before being posted to 35 TS.

Accident:

Wytham. Piloting Bristol Fighter C4830 (furthestmost aeroplane in the photo) John had invited Lt William Smith Ely to be a passenger. The aircraft stalled at 300 ft while corkscrewing to land with the engine turned off, and nosedived, burying the engine 4ft into the ground. Nickson had recently qualified as a pilot and was awaiting orders for overseas service. Court of Inquiry recorded death through an “error of judgement” on John’s part, but with no blame attributable to him.